

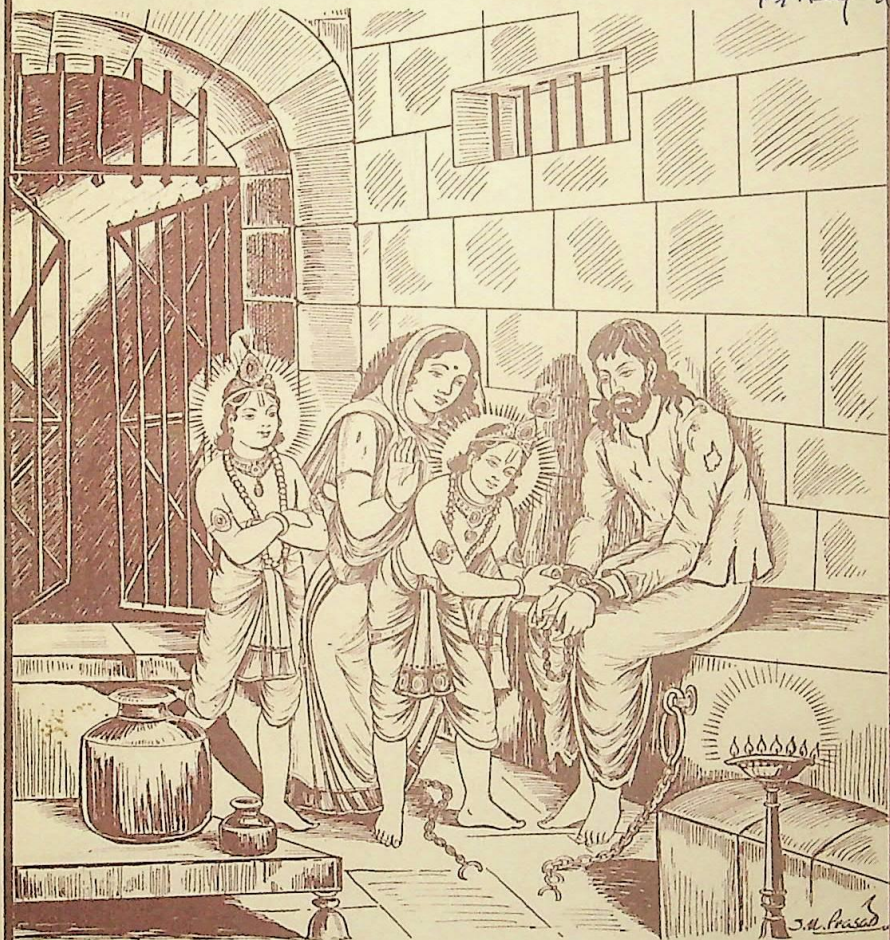
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Ravi Sankar Ray

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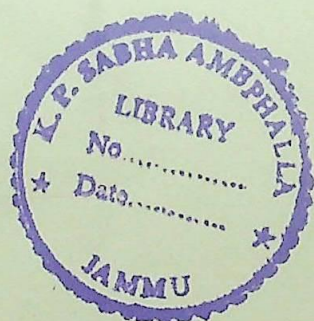
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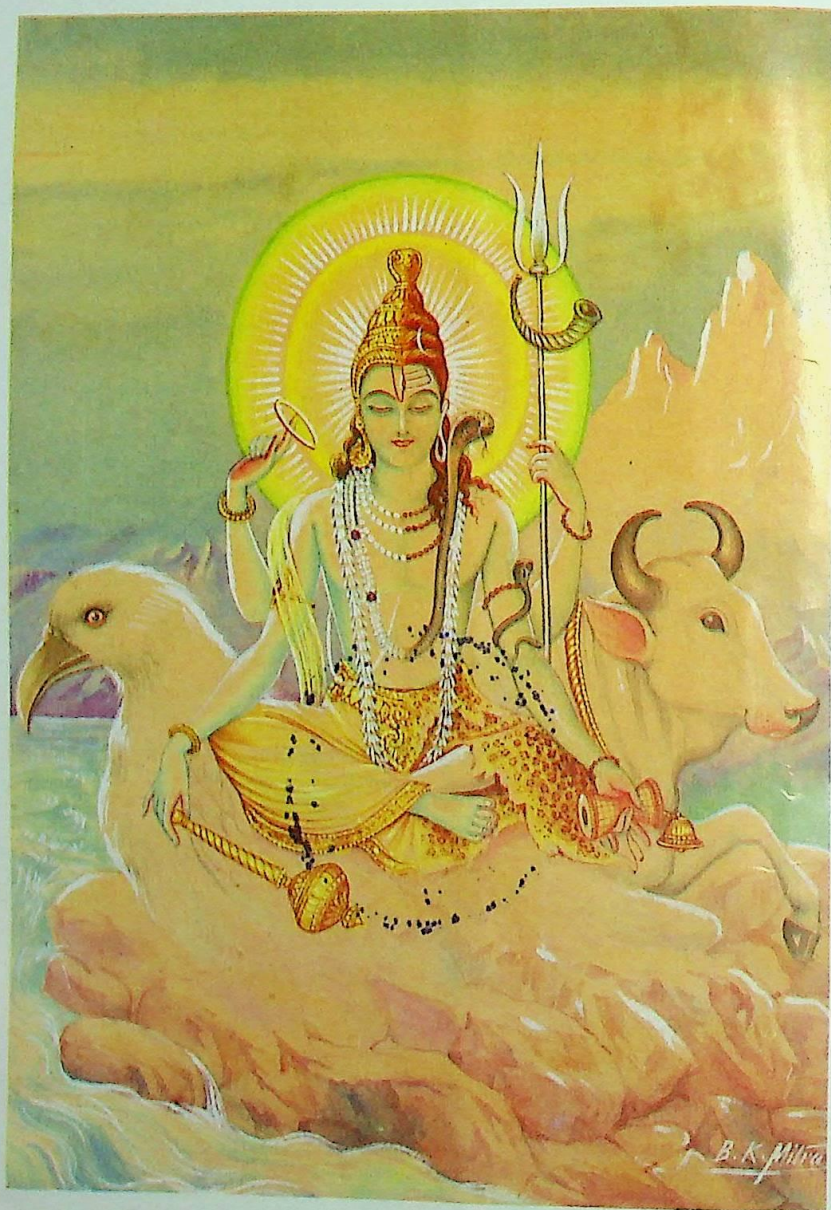
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## The Kalyana-Kalpataru



Lord Harihara



ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात्पूर्णमुदच्यते । पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥



# *The* KALYANA-KALPATARU

OR

THE BLISS

A MONTHLY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF SPIRITUAL  
IDEAS AND LOVE FOR GOD

New Series

July 1996

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Vol. XLI

उभयोः प्रकृतिस्त्वेका प्रत्ययभेदेन भिन्नवद्भाति ।

कलयति कश्चन मूढः हरिहरभेदं विना शास्त्रम् ॥

"Hari and Hara, both are essentially one. Yet they appear like different due to the difference in appearance. It is some fool who regards them different due to his ignorance of scriptural verdict ('ह' the verb-root—the *Prakṛti*—the essence, is one and the same in both the words Hari and Hara and it is the suffixes that make the two appear different. Philosophically *Prakṛti* is the uncaused cause and *Pratyaya* is the appearing power of the Supreme)."



## Dialogue With the Lord During Meditation

(Continued from page 836)

—Late Sri Jayadayal Goyandka

S—Please tell me what are Your virtues, power, truth and mystery.

L—Equanimity, peace, compassion, love, forbearance, sweetness, tenderness, gravity, liberality, friendliness, etc.,—these are My virtues. Entire greatness, strength, glory, brilliance, power, ability and the capacity to render possible what is otherwise impossible—these are My glory. Just as atoms of water, steam, cloud, drops of rain, hail, etc., all are but different forms of water, even so whatever exists, with attributes, and without attributes, with form and without form, manifest and unmanifest, matter and spirit, animate and inanimate, and whatever is beyond these, all are but Me. This is truth about Me. To believe that through My very sight, through the hearing of My voice, through My touch, remembrance, *Kirtana*, worship, obeisance and offering of praises to Me, even a sinner gets exceptionally pure; and to recognize Me, the Supreme, Omniscient, Almighty Being, though equally present everywhere, yet walking as a human being in the form of an incarnation—this is My mystery or secret.

S—How are these to be known?

L—In the beginning of its career in school, a small child tries to avoid learning its lessons, but with the growth of age and experience when it comes to realize the virtue, glory, truth and secret of learning, it begins to engage itself in study with great devotion and enthusiasm. Then, it



would not leave its study even when asked to do so. Similarly through *Satsaṅga* or association with the good, and practices of *Bhajana*, meditation, etc., man can learn My virtues, glory, secret, etc. Then he attains such an amount of joy and peace that he would not leave it even if requested to do so.

S—O Lord, when engaged in Your constant remembrance, is it possible for a man to engage his body and senses to work according to Your instructions?

L—Through determined practice it is possible. Though the mind of the tortoise is concentrated on its eggs, of the cow on its calf, of a lustful person on his lady love, of a greedy man on his wealth, of the chauffeur driving a car on the road before him, of a rope-dancer on the balance of his feet, yet they carry on other activities through their bodies and senses, even so, it is possible for a *Sādhaka* to carry on external activities through the body and senses, according to My instructions, while engaged in constant remembrance of Me.

S—What are Your instructions?

L—Elevating scriptures, sayings of saints, good impulses bubbling up within the heart—these are My instructions. When differences are observed in these three, one should adopt a course in which two of them agree, regarding that to be My instruction.

S—What should be done when the opinions of all the three are found to be different?

L—In that case, the saying of a saint should be given preference.

S—Would it not mean disrespect to the scriptures?

L—No, the saint can never say anything which is contrary to the scriptures. It is difficult for the ordinary man to determine the meaning of the scriptures; the saint alone knows the application of a scriptural instruction according

to time and place. That is why whatever is shown by the saint is the right path.

S—What is the harm if one regards the good impulses of the heart as a divine injunction?

L—One may do so. But the impulses should correspond to the instructions of the scriptures and saying of saints. It is necessary for a *Sādhaka* to submit himself to a discipline, for otherwise if due to ignorance he begins to regard the *Rājasika* and *Tāmasika* impulses as *Sāttvika* in character, he may lose all restraint and suffer a spiritual fall.

S—What do You mean by scriptures here?

L—All books composed by the *Ṛṣis*, e. g., the *Śrutis*, *Smṛtis*, *Itihāsas* and *Purāṇas*, etc., are scriptures. In case of difference of view between two books of scripture, preference should be given to the *Śrutis*. For the *Smṛtis*, *Itihāsas* and *Purāṇas*—all these are based on the *Śrutis*.

S—It is difficult for ordinary men to acquire knowledge of the *Śrutis*, *Smṛtis* and all other scriptures. By what should they go under the circumstance?

L—They should depend on *Mahāpuruṣas* who have knowledge of the scriptures.

S—Who should be regarded as a *Mahāpuruṣa*?

L—He whom you regard from your heart as the best of men is a *Mahāpuruṣa* for you.

S—O Lord, I may make a mistake in my judgment and may be deceived thereby.

L—You need not worry over this. He who surrenders himself to Me, receives My protection from all points of view.

S—O Lord, what is the standard by which I shall judge a *Mahāpuruṣa*? What are the marks of a *Mahāpuruṣa*?

L—The great soul in which the marks described in the *Gītā* chapter II, verses 55—71 as the marks of a man of



stable wisdom, chapter VI, verses 7—9 as marks of a *Yogī*, chapter XII, verses 13—19 as marks of a devotee, chapter XIV, verses 22—25 as marks of one who has risen above the *Guṇas* are found, is a *Mahāpuruṣa*.

S—It is most difficult to come in contact with such a *Mahāpuruṣa*. What is to be done under the circumstance?

L—In that case the *Gītā* which contains My instructions to Arjuna and is the essence of all scriptures and easy to understand by all, should be made the guide.

S—What are the verses which should be principally kept in view by the *Sādhaka* while developing his virtues and regulating his conduct?

L—There are many verses in the *Gītā* which can be made one's guide. One's life should be regulated particularly according to verses 7 to 11 of chapter XIII where wisdom is described, verses 1 to 3 of chapter XVI where the divine qualities are described, and verses 14 to 17 of chapter XVII where penances are described.

S—O Lord, You have said that one should ever remain pleased with every dispensation of Yours. What do you really mean by this?

L—It means one should feel delighted through every experience of life, viz., pleasure or pain, gain or loss, experience agreeable or disagreeable, taking it to be a gift specially sent by Me.

S—Pleasure is not always felt when these experiences are gone through. What is the reason for this?

L—People do not know this truth and secret that every dispensation of Mine is an expression of My compassion.

S—Pleasurable possessions of the world like wife, children, wealth, a comfortable house, etc., create infatuation and attachment and cause bondage to man. Why do You make man possessor of these things? In what way is the secret of Your compassion to be detected in this dispensation?

L—Just as a king when calling a friend sends a car to bring him, even so as the result of past virtues I make man possessor of worldly objects like wife, children, wealth, house, etc., for service of others and making others happy and for the growth of right conduct, virtues and Love for Me so that he may sooner come to Me. To understand this is to know the secret of My grace.

S—When wife, children, wealth, etc., are lost, how is Your grace to be detected in their loss?

L—When due to infatuation and attachment insects fall into a flame and are reduced to ashes, a kind-hearted man observing their miserable plight puts out the flame. Although the insects may not know it, the action is an expression of supreme compassion for them. Even so, it should be known to be an act of My supreme grace when objects of enjoyment, which cause bondage to man and drag him down to hell, are destroyed.

S—Why do You endow man with health, strength and intellectual power etc.?

L—I endow man with these powers so that he may know My virtues, glory truth and secret through *Satsaṅga*, selfless service and constant practice of *Bhajana* and meditation, etc.

S—How is one to see Your grace when afflicted with illness, danger, etc.?

L—Through the experience of illness, danger, etc., man works out the effects of previous sin, and sorrow or the bitter experience of life acts as a check to the commission of sin in future. Fear of death causes dispassion for the body and aids My remembrance. If the sufferings of a disease are gone through in the spirit of performing a penance, they may lead to My realization. The development of this attitude means seeing My grace.

S—Your grace is apparent when one contacts a



*Mahāpuruṣa*, but how is Your grace to be seen when one loses that contact?

L—Man realizes the value of a light when the light is removed from him. When contact with a *Mahāpuruṣa* is lost, it should be understood that I arrange this in order to develop in him desire to meet him again and develop love for him, and I make the *Sādhaka* realize how rare and treasurable is the contact with a *Mahāpuruṣa*.

S—Your grace is apparent when You bring about separation from wicked men of evil conduct. for thereby You save one from evil association. But why do You throw one into evil company even against one's desire or inclination?

L—I throw one into such association in order to give him an idea of the evil effects of vice, so that he may develop distaste for vice and evil conduct. But remember, when one deliberately cultivates evil association, it is not arranged by Me.

S—How is Your grace to be seen during association with, and separation from, ordinary men?

L—Association with them is arranged for their service and for cultivation of love and compassion for them, and separation is arranged for cultivation of detachment for them and for constant practice of *Bhajana* and meditation in seclusion. To understand this is to see My grace.

S—How is Your grace to be seen in difficulties like entanglement in civil or criminal suits, which disturb moral principles and practices of *Bhajana* and meditation.

L—The practices of morality, *Bhajana* and meditation are disturbed when one is subject to lust, anger, greed, infatuation, fear, weakness, etc. He who looks upon these difficulties as gifts from Me, and while facing them does not fall from morality and rectitude, virtues like firmness, courage, gravity, etc., which lead to the growth of soul-force,

increase in him. To understand this is to see My grace.

S—Why do You deprive a devotee of worldly honour, name and fame? What is the secret of it?

L—I do so with a view to awaken him from the sleep of ignorance, to remove the hindrances in the path of his spiritual *Sādhana*, and displacing hypocrisy, to develop in him devotion in its genuine form. This is the secret.

S—What is the special form of Your grace?

L—Memory of, and desire for, and actual practice of *Bhajana*, meditation, selfless service, *Satsaṅga*, virtues and right conduct—these are the special forms of My grace.

S—When such is the case, one should treat all these dispensations of Yours, arranged according to one's *Karma*, as gifts from You, and feel charmed and delighted every moment.

L—That is so, but the pity is that people do not understand it.

S—What should one do to understand this?

L—One should constantly remember My Name and Form with consciousness of their power and glory, practise disinterested *Karma* according to My instructions maintaining My remembrance, and associate with saints who have knowledge of the secret of My grace.



सोमः शौचं ददावासां गन्धर्वश्च शुभां गिरम्।

पावकः सर्वमेध्यत्वं मेध्या वै योषितो ह्यतः॥

"The god Soma bestowed sacredness upon a lady, Gandharva gave her sweet melodious voice and the fire-god bestowed on her a special type of purificatory power. So the women are always and everywhere pure and sacred."

—*Yājñavalkya Smṛti* (I. 71)



## Real Education

(Continued from page 842)

—Swami Ramsukhdas

**Question**—What is difference between the ancient students and the modern ones?

**Answer**—In ancient time as the students acquired knowledge deeper and deeper, studied and experienced it (applied it in their own interest or that of others), they developed it in them, some sort of humility and pridelessness. They were not at all mindful about what others were doing. But the modern sciences a student only reads, learns but does not experience them. Therefore a sense of pride comes in him. The knowledge without experiencing, if acquired, gets dangerous for the learner as well as for the world.

Those who have got only theoretical knowledge and are entangled with enjoyment and accumulation of wealth develop a wrong notion that whatever they know is the only right thing and the ancient people were wrong. They simply laugh at the ancient knowledge and say that the ancient philosophy is just like caressing a black cat in the darkness. In other words they feel that the ancient philosophies are bogus and they laugh it out. This is because they have only learnt it but not assimilated. But those who have assimilated the knowledge, respect and honour the ancient philosophers and their experiences.

The ancient scholars were not only educated. Their education was wedded to the worship of God. So they were in their senses and were not only led away by undue zeal. The modern educated persons are equipped with zeal no

doubt, but they are not very sensible because they do not delve deep.

Ancient scholars also were proud of their learning but as they went into the depth of the knowledge their pride gradually melted and they felt lighter from within as a patient feels after his temperature comes to the normal. In other words there remained not even a scintilla of pride. Bhartṛhari has rightly said—

यदा किञ्चिज्ज्ञोऽहं द्विप इव मदान्धः समभवं  
तदा सर्वज्ञोऽस्मीत्यभवदवलितं मम मनः ।  
यदा किञ्चित्किञ्चिद् बुधजनसकाशादवगतं  
तदा मूर्खोऽस्मीति ज्वर इव मदो मे व्यपगतः ॥

(*Nitiśataka*)

"When I knew little, I felt I am all knowing and I suffered from an acute pride-blindness like an intoxicated elephant but since when I actually started learning bit by bit from the real saintly scholars, the sense of pride from me disappeared like fever and I realized that I am a fool."

There used to be a slight difference between the principles arrived at by two different philosophers and it was because of whatever little ego they had. This is why every philosopher has his own style of exposition.

But whenever they realized the Supreme Essence even their subtle ego disappeared. In other words so long as there remained a sense of ego within the philosophers, diversity remained and because of that duality they felt that their principles and dogmas were superior and those of others were inferior. But the very moment when their ego melted the sense of duality ceased to exist even though the difference in the realizing process continued. The modern philosophers appreciate only the differences. They do not go beyond that and do not reach the experiencing stage.

In ancient days the students did acquire knowledge from their *Gurus* with a profound sense of respect and



modern learners acquire their knowledge from the servants. In other words they try to rule over the *Gurus*. The knowledge acquired from the servants does not flourish. Formerly *Guru* was free to reject or accept a disciple but these days it is the students who accept or reject the teacher. Formerly the *Guru* used to occupy his seat on a cushion and taught the subject and disciples used to sit below on a mat, but now a days students occupy benches or chairs and the teacher takes the class standing by the side of black-board.

Formerly the students learnt the knowledge for mundane uses no doubt yet their ultimate goal was always within the focus of their mind. They knew the secular subjects and the spiritual science too. Their eyes always looked for the higher and better. But the modern students do not know properly even the secular subjects. There is no question of them being proficient in spiritual matter. Whatever little they have learnt, they are unable to impart even that to others. They are contented with simply adding alongwith their names the degrees such as B. A., M. A., *Sāstrī*, *Ācārya* etc. They are always engaged in learning the secular knowledge that may be helpful in earning money and providing luxurious enjoyments. Their minds never turned to the very important question like why the human birth has been bestowed upon them, what is the real purpose of it or how they can attain the ultimate good.

If we put two lamps side by side then due to the light of each other lamps the darkness below them is removed, in the same way ancient students held discussions among them analysed and thrashed out the mundane and otherworldly problems and came to the point where they were able to learn the secular as well as spiritual matter. But modern students seldom adopt this procedure. They take them to be great scholars and their advancement is stopped thereby.

The ancient disciples were humble and devoted to their *Gurus* but the modern students are generally arrogant and indisciplined. They whether in school, college or station platform, wherever they are, always mimic and ridicule others and cut filthy jokes. They trouble and harass others. They do not have any sense of devotion or respect to their parents and teachers. On the contrary they very often insult and disgrace them. The result is that they are meted out to the same treatment at the hands of their children and they undergo that disgrace quite helplessly.

For them even this world is not pleasurable what to talk of the other world?

The ancient disciples tried to understand the deepest possible meanings of the book and they had a grip over the subject and could invent or discover new things from within them. Such students were known as *Ācārya*. But modern students do not reach the bottom of their subject nor do they have any inclination. Of course if they do have requisite sincerity and eagerness, they can very well understand.

Ancient students if happened to come across a new thing they got stuck to it, respected and gave due importance to it and tried to understand the essence of it. They used to have considerable contemplation over it and absorbed it. Therefore that thing or the knowledge was permanently stable. But if a modern student happens to get a new idea or thing he fails to find any peculiarity and novelty in it because he does not enter into the depth of it.

In olden days the students were not attracted by the superficial glamour but always tried to understand the inner sense and were always eager to appreciate it. If they could not have the complete knowledge or have partial knowledge their deficiency, to whatever extent, pinched them and they were always eager to know something more. No such



enthusiasm is generally found among the modern students. Their ignorance or deficiency to any degree does not pinch them.

In the olden days the disciples tried to be serviceable to the *Guru*, their conduct was in conformity with the wishes of the *Guru* and were happy. They identified their thoughts, principles and views with that of the *Guru's*. So there was some sort of 'अवतार' (descent) of the *Guru* to the disciple. They took the preceptorial grace to be the only source of their learning. As a matter of fact the knowledge obtained from the grace of *Guru* is not possible by the personal efforts of the disciple.

Formerly while starting any new undertaking the disciples did remember their *Gurus* due to which they could achieve success. For example Lava and Kuśa learnt the science of archery from mother Sītā so they took her to be their *Guru*. And when they caught hold of the sacrificial horse of Rāma and had to fight against the army headed by Śatrughna etc., at that time the remembrance of mother Sītā was foremost in their mind. That was the reason that they won the battle. They defeated the whole army and arrested Hanumān and Aṅgada and took them to their mother. The fact of the matter is that formerly disciples used to be grateful to their *Gurus* but modern students are not so. They are generally most ungrateful. In place of having any sense of gratitude they even launch agitations against the teachers. This is why their knowledge is not fruitful. Out of pride they feel that what ever distinction they could achieve, it was all the result of their labour and study. This is why their distinctiveness is very limited.

The disciples of olden days had restraint over their senses. They observed the rules of celibacy. They never bothered about the tasty dishes or fashionable living. But modern students are very much fond of cosmetics, comely

garments, tasty dishes, fashion and worldly pleasure etc. With the result they are unable to have restraint over their desire or observance of celibacy. There are some who declare the sense of restraint to be a fault. They hold that the very purpose of sense organs is to enjoy the sense objects.

Formerly the students joined the *Gurukula* and lived there with their *Gurus*. So there was a humbleness in their behaviour and nature for example a mango tree when laden with the fruits bends down. In otherwords modesty appears in it. On the contrary modern students take tuition from their teachers. They call them at their residence, they pay their fee at a rate stipulated. They maintain their attendance and have a vigilant watch on the timing. They cut the amount proportionately if the tutor comes late. The result is they are unable to inculcate a sense of humility in them, on the contrary they become more arrogant just as a castor oil plant even after bearing plenty of fruits does not come down, on the contrary it is more erect.\*

Formerly the students laid more emphasis on the observance of their duties. They took it as a matter of right to be dutiful. They never bothered about the fruits thereof—"कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन" (*Gītā* II. 47). Therefore they were free. Among modern students the desire for fruits is the dominating factor. Therefore they indulge in obtaining fruits and get bound—"फले सक्तो निबध्यते" (*Gītā* V. 12).

The ancient students gave the study top priority and devoted their time to it. Modern students get themselves entangled in active politics so their study becomes neglected. They do not remain sincere in their studies and become

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\* Infact it is the incomplete knowledge that brings pride in all its incompleteness. There is no room for pride in perfect knowledge. The more the knowledge reaches a stage, fuller and fuller, the more humility and simplicity appear.



unmindful towards it.

Formerly the students were religious and had faith in God. Whatever branch of knowledge they learnt, was useful for them to both their ends worldly and otherworldly. The modern students are unbelievers. So their learning does not prove to be competently fruitful for even their mundane requirements what to talk of the otherworld.

**Question**—What is difference between ancient education and modern education?

**Answer**—The ancient (spiritual) knowledge is a peace-giving agency to the self. Disquietude, internal conflict and the feeling of paucity all disappear. But the modern secular education is only superficial and is effective only to the surface layer of life. It cannot provide peace. It will increase upheaval, mutual wrangles just as more money generates more desire for money, the sense of deficit similarly the modern secular knowledge multiplies the amount of deficit. Nowadays in spite of various gadgetry being invented day by day, mental peace has become a dream because we are going on being dependent upon them. Man has ceased to be self-dependent or self-sufficient. In other words the indispensability for such articles with the man is increasing. But ancient knowledge did not make man helpless and he could realize the self.

The ancient knowledge made the man God oriented and modern education makes the student slave to the perishable things and attaches more importance to them. Modern education is useful only in mundane dealings. So it should be given due importance only in worldly transactions. The very mistake on the part of the man is to give top priority to it. Really speaking the real knowledge is that which is conducive of our liberation "सा विद्या या विमुक्तये" (*Viṣṇupurāṇa* I. 19. 41).

**Question**—Who is known to be a scholar and when does a student become learned?

**Answer**—Generally a person who feels at home in a particular subject, is supposed to be a scholar in that subject. One who is perfect in all the four *Vedas*, six *Śāstras*, eighteen *Purāṇas* and sub-*Purāṇas* is known to be scholar in the realm of the worldly knowledge. But the real scholar is he who has a first hand knowledge of the ultimate reality whether he is educated or illiterate.

When any person accepts a student superior to his own self then he calls him as a scholar. But the student should never appear as a learned person in his own eyes on the contrary he should always be aware of his deficiencies and shortcomings and should always make sincere efforts to remove the drawbacks. By doing so the student will have nothing wanting in him and will become a good scholar. But the moment he thinks of himself to be a perfect scholar, his progress will be stopped and he will inculcate the sense of vanity in him. Pride is the flower-bed for all evils to develop—

संसृत मूल सूलप्रद नाना । सकल सोक दायक अभिमाना ॥

(*Mānasa* VII. 74. 3)

God also has aversion to pride and a liking to the humility—"ईश्वरस्याप्यभिमानद्वेषित्वाद् दैन्यप्रियत्वाच्च" (*Nārada bhakti Sūtra* 27). The idea is that God does not at all like pride because it is the root cause of downfall of a man. God likes simplicity and humility because these can liberate—one from bondage.

**Question**—For a student which is better subject science or commerce?

**Answer**—A student needs both the subjects. Out of them the knowledge of commerce is more useful, that too in the near future. The study of science is not immediately useful in the worldly life.

One important thing is that if somebody reaches the bottom of the spiritual things and fully appreciates them



both his aims worldly and otherworldly are set right. But by learning only worldly transaction the ultimate aim of life is ignored because one can realize only a limited object through the limited knowledge but by realizing the limitless everything is rightly understood.

**Question**—Should one study the medical science and law or not?

**Answer**—Violence is involved in medical study and falsehood in the practice of law. If somebody practises these two free from violence and falsehood, there is no harm. The people have taken for granted that violence and falsehood are indispensable and taken them as a duty. So violence and fabrication are prominently prevailing in these two professions and people are finding it difficult to work honestly.

**Question**—Is it necessary for a student to study *Saṁskṛta*?

**Answer**—In a way the knowledge of all languages is necessary but that of *Saṁskṛta* is a must because *Saṁskṛta* contains books with so deep knowledge as no other language has. *Saṁskṛta* is most disciplined and refined language. It scrupulously follows the rules of grammar. Any other language of the world does not have a grammar like *Saṁskṛta* grammar. By acquiring knowledge of *Saṁskṛta* grammar the other languages become easy to learn. But knowledge of other languages is not very helpful in learning *Saṁskṛta*. On the contrary the study of *Saṁskṛta* becomes more difficult.

One who abandoning his own culture learns the Western sciences and languages becomes himself the same. As a matter of fact he does not learn the real knowledge but loses his own identity. So one should learn the foreign sciences and languages without jeopardising his own culture keeping it intact.

**Question**—What types of subject should a student learn?

**Answer**—Every subject and its knowledge may be acquired but the knowledge that motivates one to indulge in worldly enjoyment and amassing wealth is no knowledge at all. It is only ignorance. A student does not need such knowledge. In other words studying plays, novels, or cinema techniques is not at all necessary and they should not be learnt. The knowledge which does not go against our final aim (the study of self sublimating books or God-realization) should be acquired.

(To be Continued)



Do not make thoughtless remarks. Speak measured words. Do not speak even a single idle word. Give up idle talk, long talk, big talk and loose talk. Become silent. Do not assert your rights in this physical, illusory plane. Do not fight for rights. Think more about your duties and less about your rights. Asserting for rights comes out of *Rājasika* egoism. These rights are worthless. It is wasting of time and energy. Assert your birthright of God-consciousness. "Thou art *Brahma*"—assert this real birthright. Then you are a wise man.

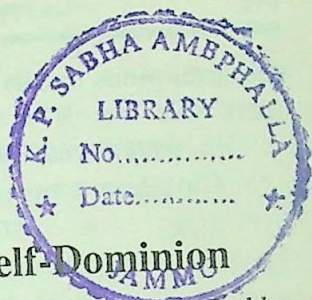
—Swami Sivananda

I do not want a kingdom, I do not want heaven, or liberation.

My only desire is this—to remove the affliction of those who suffer.

—Sri Ramakrishna





## Self-Dependence or Self-Dominion

—Late Sri Hanumanprasad Poddar

Self-dependence or independence being the nature of the soul, every creature loathes dependence and seeks to be free. Dependence has been characterized as misery and independence as happiness—

सर्वं परवशं दुःखं सर्वमात्मवशं सुखम्।

(Śrīmad Bhāgavata)

Let us, however, consider what is real dependence. Is it allegiance to the scriptural laws, religion, the ruling authority, one's parents, teachers and masters, and to moral virtues like truth etc., that constitutes dependence? Or does it consist in arbitrarily following the dictates of one's mind and senses in utter disregard of any authority? Let us find out first of all who is the Self and what is non-self or other than the self. A tyrannical and despotic ruler, parents and teachers who are malevolent to their children and pupils respectively, a selfish master and a dogma or creed which, though masquerading under the name of religion, incites one to wrongful actions—all these undoubtedly fall under the category of non-self. Defying their authority and throwing off their yoke is not only essential but has been resorted to at all times and in all climes. Defiance and even destruction of rulers like Vena and Kamsa has been recognized as morally justified. Even a father like Hiraṇyakaśipu, (father of Prahlaḍa), a mother like Kaikeyī (the mother of Bharata), and a preceptor like Śukrācārya were ignored. Sinful and ungodly masters were abandoned

and irreligious creeds had to be given up. And all this was justifiable too. It is, therefore, that Tulasīdāsa says—

He who loveth not Rāma and Sītā—

Cast him away as thou wouldst  
a myriad foes.

No matter if he happens.

to be your beloved supreme.

Behold! Prahlāda renounced his father;

Vibhīṣaṇa, his brother.

Bharata turned his back on his mother,

and Bali, on his preceptor.

The damsels of Vraja bade farewell

to their loving consorts.

But lo! they all proved a source of joy

and benediction to the world.

All those on earth who are thy friends,

and those worthy of thy loving service.

Own them only if they are real

devotees of the Lord of Raghus.

For what use that eye-salve

which serves only to blind the eyes.

Enough of it, what more should I say;

for it is a granite truth.

To me those alone are dearest and nearest,

kind and objects of worship.

Who augment my devotion to

the lotus-feet of Śrī Rāma.

Although what has been stated above is quite true, this by no means exhausts the list of those that constitute the non-self. It is the impure and vicious tendencies of our mind, our cravings for sense-enjoyment, and the various morbid feelings such as lust, anger, greed, infatuation, arrogance, jealousy, ill-will, violence, hypocrisy, hatred, pride, selfishness, lust for power, attachment and the sense of possession etc. These evils have their root in ignorance, which itself is the



result of subjection to *Prakṛti* or Matter.

*Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa* says in the *Gītā*—

पुरुषः प्रकृतिस्थो हि भुङ्क्ते प्रकृतिजान् गुणान् ।

कारणं गुणसङ्गोऽस्य सदसद्योनिजन्मसु ॥

(XIII. 21)

"Spirit, when seated in Matter, enjoys all objects of the nature of the three *Gūṇas* (qualities) born of Matter; attachment to these qualities is the cause of his birth in good or evil wombs."

It is due to this subjection that one has to take birth in various species of life even against one's will and helplessly experience the joys and sorrows brought about by one's own destiny (*Prārabdha*). Unless and until man shakes off this slavery to Nature, his soul cannot achieve real independence, he cannot attain true self-dominion. Our mind, body and senses, if not amenable to our control, are enemies (adversaries)—of the 'self'. These days people are heard declaring that they would submit to nobody's control and would be bound by no rules, but would be guided by their own uncontrolled and unrestrained impulses and would follow the dictates of their mind and senses. This is what they call dependence and they alone who think like this are real and complete slaves. Man is a social animal, and social life necessarily entails some dependence. Waywardness on the part of individuals, however, brings about disruption in society and a chain of sorrows ensues as a consequence. It is due to this licentiousness, which is a perverted form of independence, that today there is no respect for order or discipline. There is constant ill-feeling and dissension between father and son, mother and daughter, teacher and pupil, ruler and the ruled, master and servant, husband and wife, mother-in-law and daughter-in-law and between two or more brothers. It is, therefore, that all forms of happiness and tranquillity—national, social, domestic and individual—are fast disappearing.

The Lord says in the *Gītā*—

यः शास्त्रविधिमुत्सृज्य वर्तते कामकारतः ।  
न स सिद्धिमवाप्नोति न सुखं न परां गतिम् ॥

(XVI. 23)

"He who, having cast aside the injunctions of the scriptures, acts according to his own sweet will attains not perfection, nor the highest goal, nor even happiness."

The mind and senses of the man who does not obey the injunctions of the scriptures become absolutely unruly and insubordinate. His mind is ever tormented by uncontrolled passions and desires, under whose sway he commits various acts of greed and infatuation, hatred and enmity hypocrisy and insolence, ill-will and violence. Hence he never achieves unhampered and true success in life. Whatever success he attains after a hard struggle is turned into a failure; for each and every action of his is motivated by nothing else than desire and greed, anger and animosity. Such a person, given over to passion and anger, never lacks external foes. Whatever position he may attain, his rivals and adversaries and those who place obstacles in his way are always there; and, moreover, his insatiable greed never allows him to feel contented under any circumstances. Consequently, dominated incessantly by mental foes, he goes on performing such actions as tend continually to multiply his external enemies. He, therefore, never attains happiness in life; and how can one acting, throughout one's life, according to one's own will and under the sway of uncontrollable desire and without any consideration of equity and morality attain the highest goal? Hence the Lord says—

"Given over to egoism, violence, insolence, passion and anger, the malicious persons hate Me that dwell in the bodies of others as well as in their own. These haters, evil, cruel, and vilest among men, I repeatedly throw into demoniacal wombs in this world. Arjuna, cast into demoniacal wombs birth after birth, these fools, attaining not to Me, sink into still lower depths."





**For Women**

## Believe It or Not

(A Vaiṣṇava Lady)

"Dhanurdāsa is wealthy and you are badly in need of money at present. Go to his residence and steal whatever you can. If you go and beg for money, there is no guarantee that you will get the sufficient amount." This was what the *Jagadguru* Rāmānujācārya ordered his disciples to do. There had been a theft committed. Somebody had stolen the clothings of them and they were quarrelling with each other. There was a heated exchange of charges and counter charges. Everybody was accusing everybody to be guilty of theft.

The disciples were greedy. They had a deep sense of attachment to their belongings. When the *Guru* passed such an order they conveniently believed that there must be no sin or wrong or else the *Guru* must not have said so. The sense of possessing was very much active. They broke into the house of Dhanurdāsa. The couple was in a deep slumber. The movement by the unexperienced thieves made them awake. They knew what was taking place but they pretended to be sleeping. They wanted to provide them an opportunity to take as much with them as they could.

The sense of greed did not allow the *Sādhus* to stop. They started snatching the ornaments which his wife was having on her person. She changed the side when they had finished the other half of the body. The *Sādhus* got jumpy and they ran away from the house.

Now Dhanurdāsa started scolding his wife—why she

could not pretend to be sleeping for some more time. What was harm if the *Sādhus* could have got some more articles.

The *Ācārya* called for Dhanurdāsa when his wife lodged a complaint in his court against her husband. The *Ācārya* asked Dhanurdāsa to explain why he lost his temper and scolded his wife. Dhanurdāsa submitted to him—"Grand Sir, all my possessions belong to *Vaiṣṇavas*. I maintain myself on whatever is left out by them. These great *Vaiṣṇavas* undergo so much suffering and practise penances. They have renounced all worldly pleasures. All wealth goes to the Almighty and his devotees only are rightful owners. Fortunately for me if they came in my house and take their belongings, why did she interrupt? It was her greed that she did not allow them to take some more and the *Sādhus* came back empty handed.

Now spoke his wife—"My lord! I was not at fault. The *Sādhus* could take the ornaments from only one half of my person. I changed the side with the intention to allow them a chance to take the remaining ornaments from my body. Had I an inkling that the *Sādhus* would run away due to my bodily movement. I would have never done so.

Now was the turn of *Ācārya*. He passed his verdict—"You both are innocent and faultless. Because I have in my heart more affection for you the so called *Vaiṣṇavas* got envious and developed a sense of jealousy to you. It was I who planned everything and ordered them to commit theft in your house in order to teach them a lesson that becoming *Vaiṣṇava* in itself is no achievement of any import. The real *Vaiṣṇava* is he who has developed a sense of detachment dispassion and renunciation. My disciples—the so called *Vaiṣṇavas* were quarrelling like anything for their petty clothings. Now they must have come to know what a real *Vaiṣṇava* means.





## Māheśwara Sūtras

—Vishnupriyan

"By the blessings of Saraswatī, the greatest or the brightest *Praṇava Akṣara* is enlivened through the medium of man's *Buddhi*. It is Saraswatī that develops and brightens all the *Buddhis*."

(*R̥gveda* I. 4. 12)

The late revered Kanchi Mahāswāmījī, quoted in a book of collected discourses, captioned "*The Voice of Divinity*", was at some pain to direct Hindu readers of English translations of our sacred *Vedas*, to follow the commentary of *Vidyāranya* or Indian *Bhāṣyakāras* such as *Sāyaṇācārya*, instead of Western Sanskritists. Recently, I came across an interesting book published in 1930 titled, *Vilified Vedas Vindicated* by K. Nārāyaṇa Iyer of the H. H. the Mahārāja's school of Arts, Trivandrum, strongly worded perhaps, put presenting a splendid rejection of many Western Sanskritist interpretation of Hindu scriptures to the point of denigration. Well intentioned young Indian readers, approaching our *Vedas* and *Purāṇas*, through the English medium, need to look at such books.

The works of Professor Max Mueller, Justice Woodroffe, James Fergusson, Vincent Smith etc., have been challenged in that book with authentic Indian counter claim. For pride in Hindu heritage, this book is an eye opener.

*Māheśwara Sūtras*, among other Vedic *Mantras* are at least once in a year, recalled by *Dwijā's* in *Bhāratavarṣa* on *Śrāvaṇa Pūrṇimā* day. The 14 *Sūtras* are said to have

originated from the sounding of *Dhakkā* by Lord Maheśwara, for Pāṇini and other *Maharṣis* such as Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanatkumāra, Nandikeśwara, Patañjali, Vyāghrapāda etc. The fourteen aphorisms are indicative of Śiva's *Ātma Tattva*. They then wanted to know the meaning of the *Tattva* explained through Nandikeśwara. Accordingly, Nandikeśwara explained to them the 26 basic *Tattvas*, alluded to in the fourteen *Sūtras*. This instructive treatise is known as *Nandikeśwara Kāśikā*. For understanding the meaning behind the *Sūtras*, a review of what is a *Mantra* is required.

Vide *Rāmapūrvatāpinī Upaniṣad*—

क्रियाकर्मेज्यकर्तृणामर्थं मन्त्रो वदत्यथ ।

मननात्त्राणान्मन्त्रः सर्ववाच्यस्य वाचकः ॥

"A *Mantra* explains specifically what the devotee has to religiously do by way of meditation. Such a meditation saves man from the bondage of *Samśāra* and hence it is called a *Mantra*. A *Mantra* is thus a verbal expression which explains the nature of *Brahma* itself."

There are *Mantras* consisting of one, two or more letters. Unlike the colloquial parlance, where a combination of letters is termed as word, in a divinised version, the same becomes a *Mantra*. For instance, the word 'रम' to a Westerner may just be yet another word but to an Indian, this is a famous *Mantra*. As Annie Besant put it, "Indians divinise the material whereas a Westerner materialises the Divine." The fifty-one letters of the *Saṁskṛta* alphabet known as *Mātrkā Akṣaras* are used as *Mantras*. As facilitators of *Saguṇa* meditation, *Mantras* enable the seeker to advance from gross to subtle conceptions. The gross cosmology of man is technically classified in Hindu scriptures into *Nāma* (Name) and *Rūpa* (form).

In the *Saraswatī Rahasyopaniṣad* it is stated—



अस्तिभातिप्रियं रूपं नाम चेत्यंशपञ्चकम् ।  
 आद्यत्रयं ब्रह्मरूपं जगद्रूपं ततो द्वयम् ।  
 अपेक्ष्य नामरूपे द्वे सच्चिदानन्दतत्परः ॥

"Out of the five items namely *Sat*, *Cit*, *Ānanda*, *Nāma* and *Rūpa*, the first three constitute the form of *Brahma* and the last two of *Jagat*. The formless *Brahma* is described as *Sat-Cit-Ānanda* only in comparison with the nature of the *Jagat*. The nature of *Jagat* in the form of *Nāma* and *Rūpa* is opposed to *Sat-Cit-Ānanda*. It is known as *Asat*, *Jada*, and *Duḥkha*. The end purpose of all *Saguṇa* worship is to firstly reduce the gross concept of form (*Rūpa*) of *Jagat* to the subtle *Ākāśa* whose divine basis is *Śiva*. Secondly, in the same way, the gross conception of *Nāma* (Name) of *Jagat* should be reduced to the subtle *Tanmātrā* known as *Śabda*, whose divine basis is *Śakti*. *Ākāśa* is the subtlest of the *Pañcabhūtas* namely—*Ākāśa*, *Vāyu*, *Agni*, *Jala* and *Prthvī*. Likewise *Śabda*, is the subtlest of the five *Tanmātrās* designated as *Śabda Sparśa*, *Rūpa*, *Rasa* and *Gandha*. Introspecting from the gross conceptions to the subtlest, is the secret in reciting *Mantras* with a purpose.

Systematic research by our ancient sages, reveal four stages in the development of Mantraic letters. They are called *Parā*, *Paśyanī*, *Madhyamā* and *Vaikharī*. The last is the audible sound. *Madhyamā* is the low sound which is heard only to the utterer. *Paśyanī* refers to the mental desire to produce a particular sound. *Parā* refers to the conception of the divine *Śakti*, through whose help that sound is produced. It is this *Parāśakti* that is reckoned as consisting of the various *Devatās* in Hindu scriptures. The sound of each Mantraic letter having to be produced differently it is traced to a separate *Devatā*. Thus, when one utters a Mantraic letter, he is required to recall the consecration linked to that specific *Devatā* in the *Parā* stage of sound produced. Mantrically, all the fifty-one

letters have their separate *Devatās* who all constitute the *Parā Śakti*. Westerners grasp of Hindu approach to scriptures being poor, their interpretation on our scriptures should not be blindly accepted.

One other concept of *Tattva's* is to be understood, before perusing *Māheśwara Sūtras*. According to *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Purāṇa* as well as *Varāha Upaniṣad*, there are twenty four *Tattvas*, five *Karmendriyas*, five *Jñānendriyas*, five *Tanmātrās*, five *Prāṇas*, *Manas*, *Buddhi*, *Ahaṁkāra* and *Citta*. The enumeration of *Tattvas*, exhausts the divine bases of the whole cosmology of man.

We can now attempt to understand *Māheśwara Sūtras*, which are fourteen in all, as follows—

(1) अ इ उ ण् (2) ऋ लृ क् (3) ए ओ ङ् (4) ऐ औ च् (5) ह य व र द् (6) ल ण् (7) ज म ड ण न म् (8) झ भ ञ् (9) घ ढ ध ष् (10) ज ब ग ड द श् (11) ख फ छ ठ थ च ट त व् (12) क प य् (13) श ष स र् (14) ह ल्

Notice that *Akṣaras* 'ळ' and 'क्ष' are omitted and letter 'ह' is mentioned twice, above. The last semi-letters of each of the 14 *Sūtras* are not to be counted. They are technically called *Its*. They are intended for a convenient and condensed, form of expressing certain sets of letters in grammar. For instance 'अण्' means 'अ, इ and उ' 'इक्' means 'इ, उ, ऋ, and लृ' and so on.

The first four *Sūtras* explain the Mantric significance of the vowels and the remaining ten of the consonants. The *Sūtras* pertaining to vowels explain how and why the *Nirguṇa Brahma* is transformed into *Saguṇa* for the benefit of interior intellects for religious meditation. The ten *Sūtras* dealing with the consonants, specify the *Tattvas* which are symbolised by letters.

Although generally, *Tattvas* are twenty four in number, in this *Māheśwara Sūtra* it is twenty six. *Puruṣa* is the 25th and *Śiva* (denoted by the last ह) represents the 26th *Tattva*.



Now, the classification is as follows (consonants)—

(1) ह य व र ल (Five *Mahābhūtas* included in five *Tanmātrās* below)

(2) ज म ङ ण न (*Tanmātrās* five)

(3) झ भ घ ढ ध (*Karmendriyas* five)

(4) ज ब ग ड द (*Jñānendriyas* five)

(5) ख फ छ ठ थ च ट त (Five *Prāṇas+Manas+Buddhi+Ahaṁkāra*=8)

(6) क प (Includes *Prakṛti*, *Īcitta* and three *Guṇas* and *Puruṣa*=2)

(7) श ष स (Three *Guṇas* included above)

(8) ह Śiva (above the twenty five *Tattvas*=10)

Total=26

The first four *Sūtras* (Vowels)—

(1) अ इ उ ण्

Vide verse 3 of *Nandikeśwara Kāśika*, 'अ' denotes *Nirguṇa Brahma* everywhere. 'इ' denotes the *Citkalā* and 'उ' denotes *Jagat*. *Nirguṇa* with *Śakti* becomes *Saguṇa*. *Rudra-Hṛdaya Upaniṣad*, says the combination of *Umā* and *Śaṅkara* is known as *Viṣṇu*! Note the word 'हर' + 'इ' become 'हरि'. What is *Śakti* after all? It is nothing but purified *Buddhi* of man which perceives the whole cosmology as manifestation of Śiva Himself.

(2) ऋ लृ क्

According to *Kāśikā*, verses 10, 11, 12 'ऋ' *Maheśwara*, displays His *Māyā* or *Manovṛtti*. Like *Vāk* and its meaning, moonlight and the moon, *Śakti* and Śiva are inseparable. *Īśwara's Māyā* or *Manovṛtti* denotes complete *Jñāna*, *Veda* or *Vāk*.

(3) ए ओ इ

This *Sūtram* is intended for removing all misconceptions against the unity of *Brahma*. Verse 13 of the *Kāśikā*, in all the four stages *Parā*, *Paśyanī*, *Madhyamā* and *Vaikharī*.

*Māyā* and *Īśwara* are identical with *Ātmā*. *Ātmā* being the *Sākṣī* or witness of everything, is certainly single. The unity of *Brahma* is constantly assured in all our *Śāstras* lest the pseudo pandits misinterpret this.

(4) ऐ औ च्

*Kāśikā* verse 14 says—"ऐ' and 'औ' both virtually represent *Brahma* only. The all merciful being desired to evolve the divine *Jagat* which is contained within itself."

The first 4 *Sūtras* containing 13 letters (including the *Its*) are said to explain the origin of higher *Tattvas* from *Śiva* to *Prakṛti*. The next ten *Sūtras* on consonants, involve more space than can be mustered in this limited writing. Readers may peruse the book *Vilified Vedas Vindicated* by K. Nārāyaṇa Iyer (of Trivandrum). The Mantric importance of vowels over consonants is clear. The componants by themselves, are pronounced only as 'क् ख ग्' etc. In their ordinary pronunciation as 'क ख ग' etc., the vowel 'अ' is added at the end. Mantrically, they should be understood as associated with *Nirguṇa Brahma* by 'अ'. So explains the author of the book referred.



Black hearted persons are those who say—"This is mine. This belongs to me." They try to grab everything, while pure-hearted or white persons are those who dedicate everything to God, i. e., they perform every work for God or do public good, without their selfish interest. They do not say—"It is I who has done this work with success." They do every work for God and in His name. They surrender their entirety to God and give Him all the credit. They, therefore, attribute all success to God.

—Swami Rama Tirtha



## Ephemerality of Life

क्षणभंगुर जीवन की कलिका,  
कल प्रातः समय में खिली न खिली।  
मलयाचल की शुचि, शीतल, मंद,  
सुगंध समीर मिली न मिली।  
कलिकाल कुठार लिए फिरता,  
तनु नर्म पै चोट झिली न झिली।  
भज ले हरि नाम अरी रसना,  
तू अंत समय में हिली न हिली॥

Man's life is as ephemeral as a bud.  
Whether it will flower or fade  
Tomorrow morn, cannot be said.

Whether we'll live in this world  
To enjoy the fresh, fragrance-filled,  
Calm and cool Malayachal wind  
Tomorrow morn, cannot be said.

Armed with an axe in his hand  
Moves about the cruel Kaliyuga  
Whether the frail humans would stand  
His severe strokes, cannot be said.

O Tongue! Go on uttering the Name of God.  
When thou art down on death-bed,  
Thou wouldst stir or not, cannot be said

—Translated by R. S. Sengar



## Oneness of Religion

—*Swami Vivekananda*

To learn this central secret that the truth may be one and yet many at the same time, that we may have different visions of the same truth from different stand-points, is exactly what must be done. Then, instead of antagonism to anyone, we shall have infinite sympathy with all. Knowing that as long as there are different natures born in this world, the same religious truth will require different adaptations, we shall understand that we are bound to have forbearance with each other. Just as nature is unity in variety—an infinite variation in the phenomenal—as in and through all these variations of the phenomenal runs the Infinite, the Unchangeable, the Absolute Unity, so it is with every man; the microcosm is but a miniature repetition of the macrocosm; in spite of all these variations, in and through them all runs this eternal harmony, and we have to recognise this. This idea, above all other ideas, I find to be the crying necessity of the day. Coming from a country which is a hotbed of religious sects—and to which, through its good fortune or ill fortune, everyone who has a religious idea wants to send an advance-guard—I have been acquainted from my childhood with the various sects of the world. Even the Mormons come to preach in India. Welcome them all! That is the soil on which to preach religion. There it takes root more than in any other country. If you come and teach politics to the Hindus, they do not understand; but if you come to preach religion, however



curious it may be, you will have hundreds and thousands of followers in no time, and you have every chance of becoming a living God in your lifetime. I am glad it is so, it is the one thing we want in India.

The sects among the Hindus are various, a great many in number, and some of them apparently hopelessly contradictory. Yet they all tell you they are but different manifestations of religion. "As different rivers, taking their start from different mountains, running crooked or straight all come and mingle their waters in the ocean, so the different sects, with their different points of view at last, all come into Thee." This is not a theory, it has to be recognised, but not in that patronising way which we see with some people: "Oh yes, there are some very good things in it. These are what we call the ethnical religions. These ethnical religions have some good in them." Some even have the most wonderfully liberal idea that other religions are all little bits of a prehistoric evolution, but "ours is the fulfilment of things." One man says, because his is the oldest religion, it is the best: another makes the same claim, because his is the latest.

We have to recognise that each one of them has the same saving power as the other. What you have heard about their difference, whether in the temple or in the church is a mass of superstition. The same God answers all; and it is not you or I, or anybody of men that is responsible for the safety and salvation of the least little bit of the soul; the same Almighty God is responsible for all. I do not understand how people declare themselves to be believers in God, and at the same time think that God has handed over to a little body of men all truth, and that they are the guardians of the rest of humanity. How can you call that religion? Religion is realisation; but mere talk—mere trying to believe, mere groping in darkness, mere parroting the

words of ancestors and thinking it is religion, mere making a political something out of the truths of religion—is not religion at all. In every sect—even among the Mohammedans whom we always regard as the most exclusive—even among them we find that wherever there was a man trying to realise religion, from his lips have come the fiery words: "Thou art the Lord of all, Thou art in the heart of all, Thou art the guide of all, Thou art the Teacher of all, and Thou carest infinitely more for the land of Thy children than we can ever do." Do not try to disturb the faith of any man. If you can, give him something better; if you can, get hold of a man where he stands and give him a push upwards; do so, but do not destroy what he has. The only true teacher is he who can convert himself, as it were, into a thousand persons at a moment's notice. The only true teacher is he who can immediately come down to the level of the student, and transfer his soul to the student's soul and see through the student's eyes and hear through his ears and understand through his mind. Such a teacher can really teach and none else. All these negative, breaking-down, destructive teachers that are in the world can never do any good.

In the presence of my Master I found out that man could be perfect, even in this body. Those lips never cursed anyone, never even criticised anyone, Those eyes were beyond the possibility of seeing evil, that mind had lost the power of thinking evil. He saw nothing but good. That tremendous purity, that tremendous renunciation is the one secret of spirituality. "Neither through wealth, nor through progeny but through renunciation alone, is immortality to be reached", say the *Vedas*. "Sell all that thou hast and give to the poor, and follow me", says the Christ. So all great saints and prophets have expressed it, and have carried it out in their lives. How can great spirituality come



without that renunciation? Renunciation is the background of all religious thought wherever it be, and you will always find that as this idea of renunciation lessens, the more will the senses creep into the field of religion, and spirituality will decrease in the same ratio.

That man was the embodiment of renunciation. In our country it is necessary for a man who becomes a *Samnyāsi* to give up all worldly wealth and position, and this my Master carried out literally. There were many who would have felt themselves blest if he would only have accepted a present from their hands, who would gladly have given him thousands of rupees if he would have taken them, but these were the only men from whom he would turn away. He was a triumphant example, a living realization of the complete conquest of lust and of desire for money. He was beyond all ideas of either, and such men are necessary for this century. Such renunciation is necessary in these days when men have begun to think that they cannot live a month without what they call their 'necessities,' and which they are increasing out of all proportion. It is necessary in a time like this that a man should arise to demonstrate to the sceptics of the world that there yet breathes a man who does not care a straw for all the gold or all the fame that is in the universe. Yet there are such men.



O Mother, make me mad with Thy love  
What need have I of knowledge or reason?  
Make me drunk with Thy love's wine;  
O Thou who stealest Thy *Bhaktas'* hearts,  
Drown me deep in the sea of Thy love!

—Sri Ramakrishna

**For Youth**

## The Brave Boy's Marvellous Suggestion

—Chandan Lal Dhody

Seated on the pulpit at Anandpur Sahib, *Guru Tega Bahādura*, the Ninth Spiritual and Temporal Master, was listening to the problems of the disciples, and explaining their solution. "Some scholars from Kashmir seek audience with Your Lordship", announced the doorkeeper. "Bring them in with due honour," said the gracious *Guru*. They came and respectfully bowed heads. "What service can we render you learned sirs? enquired the *Guru*. "We are being terribly harassed by the emperor's viceroy. He is compelling us to get converted to their religion while we value and love our own," explained the visitors. The *Guru Mahārāja* observed: "All religions have a common goal. Every religion, when followed faithfully, leads to God. Everyone should be free to follow the faith one likes. There should be no compulsion. Tolerance should be the guiding principle. But how to tackle this problem? Great tasks are accomplished through great sacrifices. This gigantic situation demands the sacrifice of a great personality." Gobinda Rai, the *Guru's* only son, who has then just about nine years old, and happened to be there, submitted: "Who is greater than Your Holiness?" Heartily delighted at the son's suggestion, the *Guru Mahārāja* said to the visitors—"The boy has provided a solution. Please go and tell the viceroy that if Tega Bahādura gets converted, you will follow suit." They departed and acted accordingly. The viceroy conveyed their answer to the emperor at Delhi. The emperor invited the



*Guruji* and desired him to embrace his faith. The *Guru Mahārāja* declined and was beheaded. Gobinda Rai became *Guru* Gobinda Simha, the Tenth Spiritual and Temporal Master, The true King, The true guide, The Monarch of monarchs, The Shelter for the Shelterless. Bravely fighting the forces of evil and oppression, he sacrificed his all, even his sons, at the alter of Truth. Golden are the pages of the history that record these events.



यच्चक्षुषा न पश्यति येन चक्षूँषि पश्यति।  
तदेव ब्रह्म त्वं विद्धि नेदं यदिदमुपासते॥

"That which man does not see with the eye, that by which man perceives the activities of the eye, know that alone to be *Brahma* and not what people worship as an object."

—*Kenopaniṣad* (I. 6)

I will tell you something for your guidance in life. Everything that comes from India take as true, until you find cogent reasons for disbelieving it. Everything that comes from Europe take as false, until you find cogent reasons for believing it. Do not be carried away by European fooleries. Think for yourselves. Only one thing is lacking: you are slaves; you follow whatever Europeans do. This is simply an impotent state of mind. Society may take up materials from any quarter but should grow in its own way.

—*Swami Vivekananda*

## Self-restraints (Yama) and Religious observances (Niyama) As the Code of Conduct

—Prof. H. C. Gaur

The general codes of conduct have been ordained by scriptures in all religions. The scriptures are the source of knowledge of what is duty and what is not, the injunctions and prohibitions. These have to be followed by all. Lord Kṛṣṇa while concluding the discourse on divine and non-divine traits told Arjuna—"He who ignoring the precepts of scriptures, acts under impulse of desires (*Kāmakārataḥ*) does not attain to perfection (*Siddhim*) nor happiness nor supreme goal" (*Gītā* XVI. 23); *Siddhi* meaning fitness for emancipation (*Mokṣa*) and happiness is of this world. The Lord continued—"Let scriptures be your guide (authority) as regards to determination of what ought to be done and what ought not to be done. After understanding your duties as prescribed in scriptural injunctions (*Śāstravidhānoktaṁ*) you ought to perform them" (*Gītā* XVI. 24).

The scope of this article is limited to an exposition of the five codes of self-restraints (*Yama*) and five (religious) observances (*Niyama*) described by *Patañjali's Yoga Sūtra* (II. 30, 32) as the initial steps in his eight accessories (*Aṣṭāvaṅgāni*) of a system of *Yoga* leading to abstraction/withdrawal of senses (*Pratyāhāra*), concentration (*Dhāraṇā*), meditation (*Dhyāna*) and finally to trance (*Samādhi*). *Yama* and *Niyama*, as code of conduct, are also the essential prerequisites for an aspirant treading on the path of spirituality.

### Self-restraints (Yama)—

The five self-restraints in *Patañjali's Yoga Sūtra* (II. 30)



are—(1) Abstinence from injury (non-violence, *Ahimsā*), (2) Speaking the truth/truthfulness (*Satya*), (3) Abstinence from theft (*Asteya*), (4) Observance of celibacy (*Brahmacarya*) and (5) Abstinence from avariciousness (*Aparigraha*).

It is to be kept in mind that these are self-restraints (not inhibitions) in one's conduct, but when rightly practiced, these become virtues. It would appear that 'speaking the truth' is to be considered as abstinence from falsehood; the restraints (due to situations) on speaking the truth are intended. The restraints are on activities which are not considered desirable or conducive for any success on path of spirituality. The activities are—violence, falsehood, theft, indulgence in (excessive enjoyment of) sexual pleasures, avariciousness.

*Ahimsā* is the belief that no injury/pain be caused to any living creature, in anyway, at anytime or under any circumstance. According to Vyāsa, all restraints and observances have their origin (roots) in *Ahimsā*, meaning that success in the practice of (other) restraints and observances is difficult without a proper understanding and practice of *Ahimsā*.....". Also, we can do injury/violence not only by deeds (physical violence) but also by harsh speaking, and in ultimate analysis, even by evil thoughts. Thus not only do we abjure violence in actions but also take care that the speech be not deceptive, it should also not be insulting, hurtful, calumnious, slanderous, which could be the cause of mental agony (injury). We should also not harbour evil thoughts for others, since evil thoughts are often the harbinger of evil acts. Thus *Ahimsā* as a self-restraint would mean restraint not only on the deeds, but also on speech and thoughts.

What could be the restraints on 'speaking the truth (*Satya*)', when 'speak the truth (*Satyam Vada*)' is the Vedic injunction (*Taittirīya Upaniṣad* I. 11. 1)? The speech and

thoughts have to be in accord with the facts, i.e., these should correspond to what has been perceived, heard or inferred. Speech transfers one's knowledge to another. The speech should not be deceitful, should be without any motive to injury but at the same time it should be for good of others and not 'cause any injury (to anybody). Vyāsa has said that even though uttered as seen, if it proves to be injurious to other persons, it is not a question of speaking the truth but may turn out to be a sin. Thus what would appear to be a virtue (speaking the truth) may lead one to painful darkness. One should, therefore, properly examine any speech and utter only that truth which is for the benefit of all living beings. In *Mahābhārata*, Yudhiṣṭhira was asked by Droṇācārya (with reference to the death of his son, Aśvatthāmā)—"Is Aśvatthāmā dead?" He knew that Yudhiṣṭhira stood for righteousness (*Dharma*) and justice and would thus be truthful. For Yudhiṣṭhira it was a horn of dilemma—truthfulness was as unpleasant as untruthfulness. He replied—"It is true that Aśvatthāmā is dead" but his thoughts were of the elephant named Aśvatthāmā, the information about which he had obtained from the sense of sight. But before he could tell the whole truth (that he did not know if his (Droṇa's) son Aśvatthāmā was dead), his voice was drowned in a pre-planned loud beating of drums and Droṇācārya could not hear the latter part of the sentence. Apparently a sin, it was (planned to be) in this manner to save other warriors who were being put to death in hundreds by Droṇācārya. Thus self-restraint in truthfulness is uttering a thought as is actually perceived, but without any motive to do injury (*Himsā*) to others. The latter part of the statement is perhaps as important, as the first.

Theft is stealing (also owning unlawfully), what belongs to others. The injunction is—"Thou shalt not steal (Exodus: X. 115). Stealing may even be lifting of the purse of a



lady which fell on the road without her notice. Why is there a tendency to steal? It is said—"Stolen water are sweet and the bread eaten in secret is pleasant" (Proverbs IX. 17). It is because of an irrepressible desire to possess/procure or enjoy something. We develop attachment, irrespective of the fact whether or not we can afford that. What happens to such a person (dwelling intensely on the sense objects)? It has been aptly described in *Bhagavadgītā*. Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna—"While dwelling on the sense objects, the person develops (in due course) attachment for them. From such attachments springs up the desire, from (unfulfilled) desires comes anger, from the anger arises infatuation (indiscrimination between right and wrong), from the infatuation comes loss of memory. When the memory is disturbed, reason is lost. This leads to utter ruin (of the individual)" (*Gītā* II. 62-63).

Discrimination between right and wrong is interpreted by Śaṅkarācārya as between the righteous (honest) and dishonest means. Also 'loss of memory' is interpreted to mean the lessons of moral conduct which one had learnt. How can such a person have peace? Thus Self-restraint of abstinence from theft would also mean, absence of desire thereof.

Observance of celibacy is the restraint of the hidden power (power of generation). Even when observing continence, one may still be tempted to seeing and talking or touching the limbs of a woman, which are seats of cupid. Thus for a *Brahmacārī* (those in *Brahmacarya Āśrama*), even speaking to women when alone, embracing them, playing with them etc., is forbidden. How about those in *Gr̥hastha Āśrama*, since fulfilment of *Kāma* (desires, including sensual desires) are considered one of the objectives (*Puruṣārtha*) for all. One of the commandments to those entering married life (as *Gr̥hasthī*) is ".....you will take care that your line of descendants (*Prajā Tantum*) is not

broken....." (*Aitareya Upaniṣad* I. 11. 1). Also, procreation of a son (following rules of virtue/*Dharma*) has been considered by Manu (*Manu Samhitā* VI. 35-36, also IV. 257) as one of the three debts to be discharged before a person can strive for self-emancipation. Thus for those in *Gṛhastha Āśrama* observance of celibacy is intended to mean, self-restraints on (not denial of) sensual pleasures.....

Avariciousness is the eager desire to get or tenaciously keep what may or may not be one's own. This includes collection of materialistic possessions, including wealth. Wealth obtained with righteous means is not objected to by scriptures; in fact *Dharma* (code of righteous conduct), *Artha* (wealth), *Kāma* (desires, including sensual desires) and *Mokṣa* (emancipation), in the given order, are considered as the four objectives (*Puruṣārtha*) for all. Earn wealth (*Artha*), but without the obstinate attachment to it. Vyāsa has asked us to contemplate on the defects caused by collection, preservation (of wealth and other worldly possessions) since ultimately these have to be left behind (on death) in this world. Thus self-restraint on avariciousness is best expressed by—"Enjoy in renunciation or without attachment....what has been given (becomes available) to you (in this ephemeral world)...do not (beg) covet the wealth of anyone..."(*Īśa Upaniṣad* 1).

These constitute the fivefold restraints (*Yama*) to be observed by all aspirants on path of spirituality. Patañjali continues—"These are great vow (*Mahāvratā*), are universal and irrespective of (not limited by) life-state (*Jāti*), space/place (*Deśa*), time (*Kāla*) and circumstances (*Samaya*) (*Yoga Sūtra* II. 31).

(To be continued)





## Craving of the Soul

—K. D. Sharma

How eagerly I wish,  
To enjoy the eternal bliss,  
Of getting Thy Divine vision,  
And with Thee my complete fusion.

For such fusion I intensely long,  
As all else, I know is wrong,  
Pray, accept me in Thy loving embrace,  
And liberate me with Thy limitless grace.

Worldly pleasures are trash and transient,  
Lasting only for a single moment,  
So why should I be, for them impatient,  
When they are not at all permanent.

They bring forth bemoaning baneful end,  
In sorrow and sins, they make us land,  
And drag us down to the darkest hell,  
When the Yama sounds our damned death knell.

So, free me from the cycle of births,  
It tortures me and cruelly hurts,  
Thou art merciful Thou art kind  
For miserable me, some solution find.



## Story

### Immortality

देहिनोऽस्मिन्यथा देहे कौमारं यौवनं जरा ।  
तथा देहान्तरप्राप्तिर्धीरस्तत्र न मुह्यति ॥

"Just as boyhood, youth and old age are attributed to the soul through this body, even so it attains another body. The wise man does not get deluded about this."

(*Gītā* II. 13)

"Aghoranātha! Monkhood is useless if it is tainted with self interest" the preceptor instructed on the very day of initiation. Today Aghoranātha is remembering his words—"Fame, luxury and enjoyment is desired by all worldly men also. What else will the occult powers give you? Monastery, temples and the worldly praises, these are a few deadly evils but prevalent among the monks, have made them worldly. Treading on the same path don't make me ashamed, my child! This is another form of household life—libidinous and forbidden by the scriptures. I hope you will not feed your individual ego. Transcend them all."

"To be absorbed in finding out a way for self-liberation is also a kind of being selfish and feeding individuality. It is also a kind of selfishness." Aghoranātha reflected in his mind. Lean and thin, destitute of possessions, absorbed in severe penance, Aghoranātha did nothing so far which would go against what the preceptor instructed him on the day of initiation. Due to his penances, disciplining in solitude and indifferent attitude to the worldliness, everybody felt compelled to bow his head before him.



"Hush! The *Siddhis* (achievements) do appear during the process of *Yoga* before a real *Yogī*; there is nothing new in it. They approached Aghoranātha also, not once but repeatedly but he always rejected them as if they were some sickly untouchable dogs.

*Guru Gorakhanātha*, the very manifestation of Lord Śiva is immortal. He has virtually blocked the passage of time in the form of death. "He did obtain the *Raseśvara* (mercury, medicated and refined superlatively when it stops all reactions) which provided him this power." It was a common belief among the followers of *Nātha* cult. Aghoranātha also had heard them and sincerely believed them to be true. Today he felt inspired to do something for all and sundry who are suffering from the old age and death, diseases and sorrows, desire, anger and greed. He made himself determined to find some ways and means to release them all from the bondage of birth and death. *Raseśvara* and *Raseśvara* alone is the remedy. He must get it at any cost. Everybody is entitled to enjoy the benefit from the *Raseśvara*. Even the oblation of his life into the sacrificial fire is not too much.

By virtue of simply being a man, nobody is great. Physical strength, talent, wealth or even the penances do not make a man great. It is the firm determination for a greater cause that makes one great. One who is sincere to his aim, has a real determination for the purpose and is untainted with selfishness the cosmic energy itself provides every opportunity to make its efforts a success. All impediments surrender before him.

The vow taken by Aghoranātha was really great, he had a firm determination and still stronger faith in his success. He could collect the necessary literature—how to refine the mercury to the highest degree within a very short period that would have required an ordinary aspirant to

employ all his energy for his whole life.

X

X

X

The purest Brahminical mercury—without any shade—black, yellow, pink or reddish; bright shining like full moon—mercury is not easily available on the earth. After undergoing several *Anuṣṭhānas* an aspirant purified by the *Mantras*, can get such mercury in the heart of a desert untrodden by human feet or the feet of any other creature, during the summer noon hours. This type of mercury oozes out of the burning sand particles drop by drop in the smallest possible quantity."

It is an undertaking like throwing oneself into the fire itself. The burning heat of the desert, waterless expanse of the sand and wandering into it for miles and miles on apparently aimless journey—heaps of burning sand flying in the atmosphere and the difficult search for the smallest possible mercury drops. How odd but Aghoranātha did not mind it. He collected purest possible mercury droplets belonging to the Brahminical category and he obtained it in a big quantity.

Pure mercury—the bodily essence of Lord Śiva. One who has obtained it becomes adorable even to the heavenly deities. The haughty Cāmuṇḍā or Chinnamastā who drinks her own blood become serene before him. Yoginīs, ogres or goblins are afraid of his shadow even. Eventhough having such mercury procured, is in itself a great achievement but to Aghoranātha it was nothing.

A *Siddhabhūmi* (a blessed holy place) was the first requirement. Aghoranātha thought of Kāmākhyā and Hingalāja but rejected them as Mahāmāyā the presiding deity of these places is the very impeding goddess who obstructs the spiritual process. He rejected the idea of Jalandhar Pīṭh also. Without the blessing of Tripurabhairavī no aspirant desirous of acquiring *Rasa* (mercury) in its required form



can get any success.

The reflection of Tripura Sundarī that falls on the camphor white body of Lord Śiva which appears to be a bit dark is known as Tripurabhairavī. Aghoranātha heard it from some senior saint in his cult. This piece of information proved helpful in selecting a suitable place.

The reflection of the goddess in the dark chest of Lord Śiva—in other words *Puruṣa* accompanied by *Śakti*—the manifestation of *Ardhanārīśvara* (half male and half female) and the ground of his sport. He selected the emanating point of the river Pārvatī quiet far on the snowy peaks. The high peaks of Himalayas covered with white snow seem as if the very *Sattvaguna* was solidified and embodied. The thin line of Pārvatī and embracing it, the hot water fall look like the divine couple transformed into watery substance. The dietary requirements of a perfect *Yogī* like Aghoranātha were almost nil. Whenever he found it necessary, he descending from the mountain, could gather some beet roots and fruits easily.

"Only one aim—all being of the world must get rid of old age, death, diseases, sorrows". Quite unmindful of his bodily conditions. Hunger and thirst left miles behind. The loin cloth around his waist and *Mudrās* in his earlobes. Aghoranātha who does not feel necessary to have a tumbler with him to take water, is having in his bag medical apparatuses and necessary medicinal herbs. He occupied a place in this untrodden snowy area. Only one ailment—how to remove the sufferings of the world.

"Where is the fault? What mistakes or slips am I committing?" Aghoranātha has been engaged for the last six months in trying to kill the mercury. Today is the full moon of *Śarat*. There seems to be no discrepancy anywhere yet the mercury is obstinately refusing to come under control. It gets fainted. It is transformed into a tablet no

doubt. It has also become heat-resistant but when it is put again under experimenting process, it immediately starts reacting and seems to be enlivened. Why is it so? Aghoranātha is puzzled. Now he decided to have a deep dive into his inner self. He sat erect in a meditative posture and concentrated his faculties. Within no time he was in deep *Samādhi*.

X

X

X

He saw a human body milky white as if the very moonlight has been transformed into a human shape—the body made of not gross matter but of subtle elements like ether or light. Penance incarnated. Tawny matted locks flash like lightning, the *Mudrās* in the ear lobes. It was only these things that indicated the appearance not to be a God but an accomplished *Yogī*. Aghoranātha could not open his eyes. His limbs simply refused to make any movement. Yet the vision was very clear as if he was visualizing through his physical eyes. He heard—

"My child, this was exactly what I, Gorakhanātha once wished." The voice was very sweet and full of love and affection but a little tired. "Gorakha could have died. He never wished immortality. I have always been in darkness. I never knew—it was well thought design of Mahāmāyā to make me immortal. This I knew only after the show was over. I had already achieved the great *Rasa*. The ways of Mahāmāyā are strange and unknowable nor is there any power that could obstruct her wishes being fulfilled. I thought I could stop the movement of *Kāla* but I was wrong. It was too late when I realized that Mahāmāyā immortalized me to guide the future aspirants and check them from taking a wrong path."

Aghoranātha felt that the mission of his life was accomplished. His penances and spiritual disciplining for births after births materialized then and there. The direct



vision of *Guru Gorakhanātha*—the very manifestation of Lord Śiva! The impossible became possible. He was blessed. He was experiencing a mental storm even though the body was motionless.

The *Guru* went on saying—"The momentum of Lord Mahākālā cannot be checked. Though the means are there but they are activated only when the Mahāmāyā wishes so. In the flowing currents of time only a few are immortalized by those means with a specific purpose.

The *Guru* did not fail to realize that a disciple before him is still unsatisfied so he further said—"Suppose you are successful in your mission. What will you get? You could conquer only old age, death and diseases. Anything more? No. The fear, the sorrow, the greed, the infatuation and the like are emanated from the mind. They are the creations of the mental faculties. Till they are existent the man cannot be happy. By becoming only immortal how can you say that the man will be happy? Don't you think that the immortality will make a man tyrant? Until and unless the man brings in control his senses, desire, anger and greed he will become more and more irreligious and sinner. His mind can never get any peace and there cannot be a real happiness without peace."

"Pardon, pardon me, my master, excuse me—the ignorant and foolish as I am. Aghoranātha cried. There was nobody when his eyes were opened. His body was sweating even at the top of snowy Himalayas. Immediately he immersed all his collections in the river Pārvatī. He came down in the planes among the people who say that Aghoranātha has gone mad.



## Read and Digest

There is no power greater than thought. By the force of thought, one shapes one's personality, and moulds one's destiny.

—Swami Jyotirmayananda

O King of men, the distinction between the supreme Self and the individual soul is imagined through ignorance. When that is dissipated, the difference between the individual soul and the supreme Self vanishes to be sure.

—Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (1. 8)

Like the bee gathering honey from different flowers, the wise one sees only the good in all religions and accepts the essence of the different scriptures.

—Śrīmad Bhāgavata

The secret of happiness is different. The secret is that the more you seek things, the more you lose them. The more above desire you are, the more you feel yourself higher than want, the more the objects will seek you.

—Swami Rama Tirtha

Love may be symbolised by a triangle. The first angle is, love never begs, never asks for anything; the second, love knows no fear; the third and the apex, love for love's sake.

—Swami Vivekananda

Desire for pleasure is the mother of frustration. Compassion eats up the craving for pleasure.

—Swami Sharanananda





## Some Hindu Cultural Habits—their Significance

—B. M. N. Murthy

Every country has its own traditional beliefs and cultural habits practised from times immemorial. However most of these are gradually disappearing with the passage of time. While the impact of modern science and Western education, which lay greater emphasis on material comforts, may be one of the reasons for this degeneration, equally important is the factor that no attempt is made to understand the significance of such beliefs and customs. Such beliefs and customs are meant mainly to discipline the body and mind which, in turn, induces happiness and peace of mind. They need not stand scientific scrutiny.

Wearing of ornaments by ladies is a practice prevalent all over the world—only the design, shape, pattern, style etc., vary from place to place. While most of the countries treat the ornaments as objects of beauty meant to decorate the body, some ornaments worn by our Hindu ladies have special significance in addition to aesthetics and beautifications. Their significance could be traced as far back as to the days of the *Rāmāyaṇa*.

In the *Rāmāyaṇa*, we hear of Sītā in the Aśoka forest thinking of Rāma only all the time. She had removed many of her ornaments and thrown them away while being carried away by Rāvaṇa. This she had done to enable Rāma to trace the path undertaken by her abductor Rāvaṇa. But she did not remove the *Maṅgala Sūtra* and the other auspicious ornaments like the rings on the toes of her

feet (what we call 'as *Kaluṅgara* in Kannada), the wedding ring, the ear-ornaments and the bangles. In the Hindu tradition, these ornaments always augur auspiciousness to the ladies and are supposed to be worn all the time. The removal of anyone of them is always fraught with risk and danger.

One of the traditional ceremonies in the Hindu Wedding is called *Māṅgalya Dhāraṇa*. This consists of tying a yellow thread bedecked with turmeric and *Kuṁkuma* around the neck of the bride by the bridegroom. As its very name suggests, *Māṅgalya* means auspiciousness and it is meant to give lifelong happiness to the married couples. Of late it has become a fashion for some of the so-called modern educated ladies to remove the *Maṅgala Sūtra* and replace it by a golden necklace. Similarly the *Kuṁkuma* on the forehead (prepared in the prescribed manner by using turmeric, lime, ghee etc.,) is also a sign of auspiciousness. However it is unfortunate that nowadays we notice most of the girls and ladies, without understanding the significance of the *Kuṁkuma* have done away with this auspicious habit. They now decorate their foreheads with plastic stickers of varying shades and designs.

In our *Purāṇas* we have heard of 'अमृत मंथन' the churning of the ocean jointly by the *Devas* and *Asuras*. As a result, when good things surfaced both *Asuras* and *Devas* took them away; however, when poison came out (काल कूट विष) everyone ran away. Earlier, the *Devas* had taken *Amṛta* (nectar) and had no fear of death. However the mere sight of poison frightened them away. All of them ran away including *Brahmā*. It was only Lord Śiva who could swallow the poison and contain the same in his neck (hence the name *Nīlakaṇṭha*). He did not die. What is the reason for this? The great Ādi Śaṅkara says that this was due to the greatness (महिमा) of the ear-ornament that *Pārvatī* was wearing. This meaning is beautifully brought out in his



famous composition *Saundarya Laharī* when he says—

सुधामप्यास्वाद्य प्रतिभयजरामृत्युहरणीं ।  
 विषद्यन्ते विश्वे विधिशतमखाद्या दिविषदः ॥  
 करालं यत्क्ष्वेडं कवलितवतः कालकलना ।  
 न शम्भोस्तन्मूलं जननि तव ताटङ्कमहिमा ॥

(28)

"Oh Mother! Brahmā, Indra and other celestials perish even though they have drunk nectar (अमृत) which confers immunity from frightful old age and death. If the longevity of Śiva despite his having swallowed the terrific poison is not limited by time, it is because of the greatness of your ear-ornament (*Tāṭaṅka*).” Thus, the wearing of the ear-ornament is a great symbol of Hindu culture. We have to preserve this habit on account of its protective value. This habit heralds and ensures the ladies' welfare and *Saubhāgya*.

In North India particularly in U.P. and Bengal we notice that ladies, besides wearing *Kumkuma* on their forehead, put it also on the head at the parting of the hair. This habit again emphasises the auspicious nature of *Kumkuma* since Lakṣmī, the goddess of prosperity is supposed to reside there as per our scriptures, the other places of Her residence being (a) The hind part of the cow (b) The forehead of the elephant (c) The lotus flower (d) The *Bilva* leaf. By putting the *Kumkuma* on the forehead, we will be worshipping Lakṣmī.

Wearing of *Vibhūti* (sacred ash) on the forehead, arms, chest etc., is another cultural habit common among men particularly in traditional households. The *Amarakośa* (*Saṃskṛta* lexicography) defines *Vibhūti* as—

विभूतिर्भूतिरैश्वर्यम् ।

(*Vibhūti* is synonymous with prosperity). and therefore one who wears *Vibhūti* will be blessed with wealth,

particularly the spiritual wealth. Moreover, *Vibhūti*, which is actually the ash of cow-dung by itself a great disinfectant and cleanser, can remove the most obnoxious odour. Dealing with the philosophical significance of *Vibhūti*, the late Kāñcī *Paramācārya* says—

"When the things of the world are burnt, they first become black being charred. When burnt again, what remains is the white ash or *Bhasma* which persists even when it itself is burnt. The consummation of all objects is *Bhasma*. Ash or *Bhasma* in the material plane corresponds to Śiva in the spiritual plane. When we test everything in the fire of knowledge (*Jñāna*), the residue is ash. We smear our bodies with the sacred ash to remind ourselves of Śiva who is the ultimate goal of life."

—*The Call of the Jagadguru* (p-113)

Decorating the house front every morning with *Raṅgoli* (also called *Raṅgavallī*) is another auspicious traditional Hindu Custom which heralds prosperity and peace to the family. The significance of putting *Raṅgoli* is similar to that of *Ghaṇṭā Nāda* (ringing of the bells) the purpose being.

आगमार्थं तु देवानां गमनार्थं तु रक्षसाम्।

"To welcome the good things in life and drive away the evil forces."

This is so much a part of our day to day household chores that in case the *Raṅgoli* is missing any particular morning, it immediately signifies something inauspicious. This is the reason we do not put *Raṅgoli* on the days of mourning like death and other inauspicious events.

Ours is a rich and hoary tradition with lots of cultural habits, customs and beliefs, each pregnant with meaning. We should try to understand the significance of these and follow them to the extent possible. While they may not give any immediate material benefit, they will certainly ensure happiness and peace of mind in the long run.





## **Bhakta Gāthā**

# **The Great Polymath—Vedānta Deśika**

(Continued from page 879)

—Prof.K.R. Rajagopalan

### **His didactic Works—**

His magnum opus is *Rahasyatrayasāra*, written in a judicious mixture of *Sam̐skṛta* and Tamil, known as *Maṇipravāla* style. This detailed work explains in full the concept of complete surrender or *Śaraṇāgati* to the Lord by the human being. Even though the concept of surrender finds a unique place in *Bhagavadgītā*, the full credit of it as a means to Godhead by every human being irrespective of caste or creed, should go to our *Vedānta Deśika* alone. The three *Rahasyas*, according to Vaiṣṇavite thought are the *Mūla Mantra* or *Aṣṭākṣarī* “ॐ नमो नारायणाय” the *Dvaya Mantra* made of two halves “श्रीमन् नारायण चरणौ शरणं प्रपद्ये। श्रीमते नारायणाय नमः।” and the *Carama Śloka* of the *Bhagavadgītā*—“सर्व धर्मान्परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं ब्रज। अहं त्वा सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः॥” It contains 32 chapters, each one beginning and ending with *Sam̐skṛta* and Tamil verses. These sum up the contents of that chapter.

Some of his other works are *Tattva Muktakalpa*, *Adhikaraṇa Sārāvalī*, *Nyāsa Daśakam*, *Nyāsa Viṃśati*, *Mīmāṃsā Pādukā*, *Nyāya-Parīśuddhi* and the like. He has summerised the contents of the 1000 verses of Tiruvoimozhi in Tamil, into about 100 verses.

### **Some miracles attributed to Him—**

Veṅkaṭanāthan's long and eventful life is not wanting in miracles—even though his greatness does not depend on them. It is customary to attribute miraculous powers

to all our great men and women and his is no exception. We cite only three examples. One has already been indicated in getting gold from Lakṣmī for, a young man's wedding. A snake charmer was asked to unleash a large number of poisonous snakes at Veṅkaṭanātha; but he, cool and unperturbed, recited the *Garuḍa Mantra* and lo! The snakes fled for their dear life. At another instance, some of his adversaries prevented Brahmins to go to his house for a *Śrāddha* ceremony, Veṅkaṭanātha prayed to the Lords of three places—Tirupathi, Srirangam and Kanchipuram and there manifested three Brahmins who helped him do his duty towards his *Pitṛs* in the form of a *Śrāddha*.

### Special qualities and Traits—

His Vairāgya (rectitude or renunciation) is exemplary. He used to collect during *Uñchvṛtti* (ritual begging) only enough to feed himself and his family. Once, in compassion evidently, somebody dropped a gold coin in his bowl, which he did not notice, but when he went home, his wife showed it to him. In utter disdain, Veṅkaṭanātha took a piece of wood and threw the coin out unceremoniously.

His meeting with Vidyāraṇya, a minister in the Vijayanagara court and his reply to the minister's invitation to visit the royal court are worth quoting in extenso. But we shall be brief in summarising his *Vairāgya Pañcakam*. "The grains scattered in the field after the crop is harvested are enough to quench the fire in the stomach; a handful of water from a large tank is enough to slake one's thirst; a piece of cloth is enough to cover one's body, these being so, why should even the wise and the learned resort to the king's courts for the sake of this span-spaced stomach?"

What, then, was his concept of wealth? The Lord's bounty and grace only. As he says—"Father's earnings I have none; neither have I made any wealth; but my grandfather's wealth is mine and it is on the Hastigiri Lord



Varadarāja Himself! My wealth is Lord Kṛṣṇa who graced the chariot of Arjuna and thereby increased his valour! It protected the cows and cowherds of Brindavan by lifting the Govardhana Hill."

### His poetical skills—

*Vedānta Deśika's* picturisation of some of the situations and *Līlās* of the Lord is breath-takingly original. Out of the plethora of possible instances, this humble self chooses a couple only.

In the *Daśāvatāra Stotra*, he describes the Narasimha manifestation of Lord Viṣṇu exclaiming—"The pillar in the hall of the *Rākṣasa* Hiraṇyakaśipu became the grandmother of Brahmā." (*Mahāsura-gr̥ha sthūṇā pitāmahyabhūt*). Brahmā's father is Lord Viṣṇu and the pillar gave birth to Lord Viṣṇu. What an imagery! In his *Śrīstuti* on Devī Lakṣmī, he explains the munificence of the *Devī* as follows—"Wherever your playful eyes wander, there the various types of wealth and pelf grow in competition as it were."

यस्यां यस्यां दिशि विहरते देवि दृष्टिस्त्वदीया ।

तस्यां तस्यामहमहमिकां तन्वते सम्पदोद्यः ॥

One should enjoy not only the musically sweet sounds in these two lines, but also the meaning thereof in the competitiveness of the various types of wealth *Aham Ahamikām*. I leave to better minds than mine to read, understand and enjoy the *Stotras* of *Deśika* in all their grandeur.

The worship of Mahā Viṣṇu and His various manifestations were explained and codified by the Ālwārs in chaste Tamil. They did not write anything in *Saṁskṛta*. The three Ācāryas who followed them, apparently did not compose in Tamil, but only in *Saṁskṛta*. It was left to the genius of *Vedānta Deśika* to sing in both these divine languages and deserve the honorific *Ubhaya Vedāntar*. (It is customary for all

*Śrīvaiṣṇavas* to add 'Uba' 'Ve' before their names in all *Lagnapatrikās* etc., perhaps undeservedly except in the sense that they are followers of Veṅkaṭanātha, the great!)!

Brevity is the hallmark of a genius. About the concept of *Śaraṇāgati* or complete surrender to the Lord, Veṅkaṭanātha has written treatises in Tamil and *Saṁskṛta*. He has summarised them in about 20 verses and again in about 10 verses called *Nyāsa Daśakam*. This is almost a daily recital in Vaiṣṇavite homes. Only one of them, in effect, succinctly explains the full concepts. It is—

न्यस्याम्यकिञ्चनः श्रीमान् अनुकूलोऽन्यवर्जितः ।

विश्वासप्रार्थनापूर्वं रत्नरक्षाभरं त्वयि ॥

The first word itself is *Nyasyāmi*—I surrender. This should precede anything else. One is reminded of Āñjaneya's shout to Rāma on his return from Lanka '*Dr̥ṣṭā Sītā*'. Since Rāma is all expectations and worries, he should be assured first by stating 'seen', then the name of Sītā could come. Otherwise Rāma's anxiety would increase if the name of Sītā is uttered first and later the word 'seen'! The surrender explains his plight as '*Akiñcana*—nothing with me'; You are a *Śrīmān*, the possessor of all types of wealth; I have no other means; I have full faith in you and I request to accept the onus of looking after me. The five *Aṅgas* or parts of *Saraṇāgati* are thus one's own feeling of helplessness and lack of means, faith in the almighty who is all powerful and a request to accept the surrender.

Veṅkaṭanātha's greatness and erudition was realised even during his life time by such persons as *Vidyāraṇya*—who tried his best to make him visit his royal court. Another great Advaitic scholar Appayya Dikṣita has praised the poetical skills of Veṅkaṭanātha in clean and ringing terms—in his commentary on *Yadavābhyudaya*. Once Veṅkaṭanātha was asked to judge which one was better *Madhva-Siddhāntī Akṣobhyamuni* or Advaitin *Vidyāraṇya*



in a Vedantic debate. *Vedānta Deśika* gave his verdict in favour of Akṣobhya only. (Of course, some *Advaitins* opine that it was in favour of Vdyāraṇya alone!)

### Conclusion—

The followers of *Rāmānuja Siddhānta* at least one branch who style themselves *Vadagalai's* [Northern or *Saniskṛta* school—the name by which *Saniskṛta* is called even today in Tamilnadu is *Vadamozhi* (Northern language) while in actual fact, the honorific should go to Telugu!] have deified him almost. His and his wife's images have been installed in the temple precincts of Kāñchī Varadarāja. So, we have *Abhiṣekam*, *Aṣṭottara Arcanās*, *Utsavams* and what have you, to this scholar, first as to the main deity! And, as part of daily worship at home and in temples, they repeat—"Vedānta Deśika, please live for another hundred years!" But how many of those have made a study of a few of his works at least, one is not very sure.

Other scholars of *Saniskṛta* and Tamil should also study his works, at least to realise the vast expanse of his genius.



### Wisdom

A man is but the product of his thoughts; what he thinks that he becomes.

A man should learn to listen.

A short saying often contains much wisdom.

A wise man is strong.

A wise man will make haste to forgive because he knows the value of time and will not suffer it to pass away in unnecessary pain.

—Other Men's Flowers

## The Holy Shadow

—Swami Rama Tirtha

Long, long ago there lived a saint so good that the astonished angels came down from the heaven to see how a mortal could be so godly. He simply went about his daily life diffusing virtue, as the star diffuses light and the flower perfume, without even being aware of it.

Two words summed up his day—he gave, he forgave. Yet these words never fell from his lips. They were expressed in his ready smile, his kindness, forbearance and charity.

The angels said to God—"O Lord, grant him the gift of miracles."

God replied—"I consent; ask what he wishes."

So they said to the saint—"Should you like the touch of your hands to heal the sick?"

'No', answered the saint—"I would rather God should do that."

"Should you like to convert guilty souls and bring back wandering hearts to the right path?"

"No; that is the mission of angels. I pray, I do not convert."

"Should you like to become a model of patience attracting men by the lustre of your virtues, and thus glorifying God?"

'No', replied the saint, "If men should be attracted to me, they would become estranged from God. The Lord has other means of glorifying Himself."



"What do you desire then?" cried the angels.

"What can I wish for?" asked the saint smiling.

"That God gives me His grace; with that should I not have everything?"

But the angels wished: "You must ask for a miracle, or one will be forced upon you."

"Very well", said the saint, "that I may do a great deal of good, without ever knowing it."

The angels were greatly perplexed. They took counsel together and resolved upon the following plan: every time the saint's shadow should fall behind him or at either side, so that he could not see it, it should have the power to cure disease, soothe pain and comfort sorrow.

And so it came to pass: when the saint walked along, his shadow, thrown on the ground on either side or behind him, made arid paths green, caused withered plants to bloom gave clear water to dried up brooks, fresh colour to pale little children and joy to unhappy mothers.

But the saint simply went about his daily life diffusing virtue as the star diffuses light and the flower perfume, without even being aware of it.

And the people respecting his humility, followed him silently, never speaking to him about his miracles. Little by little, they came even to forget his name, and called him only "The Holy Shadow."



*Jñāna, Bhakti, Yoga and Karma*—these are the four paths which lead to salvation. One must follow the path for which one is best suited; but in this age special stress should be laid on *Karma Yoga*.

—Swami Vivekananda

## Selflessness

—Rev. Arthur E. Massey

"Give up thy life if thou would'st live."

—*The Voice of the Silence*

The disease of the world is selfishness. Whatever we bemoan, whatever we lament, all the horrors and brutalities perpetrated by man is the fruit of selfishness, and there is no remedy other than a change of heart.

It cannot be denied that the fountainhead of all moral evil is selfishness. I mean by selfishness, living to the lower, the narrower, the less developed, the less real self. If it is selfish to care more for oneself than for one's neighbour, it is selfish, in a deeper sense, to care more for one's lower than one's higher self. There is no vice, no bad habit, no moral weakness, no sin, no crime, no offence against God or man, which does not come under one or other of four heads—pride, temper, greed, sensuality. As a scheme of life the quest of the real self wages a truceless war against selfishness in all its forms. For the selfish man, whatever may be his special type of selfishness, is one who has either quitted the path of self-realization or is loitering unduly in its earlier stages. But how is one who has quitted the path to be induced to return to it? And how is one loitering in to be induced to arouse himself and resume his journey? To what motives is the moralist to appeal?

We are faced as it seems, by a dilemma. If a motive is to be effective, it must be self-regarding. Pure altruism is impossible. No man can get outside himself. One's



action, however wide may be its circle of disturbance, begins and ends in oneself. But the aim of the moralist is to make us virtuous; and if unselfishness is of the essence of virtue, and if all motives are necessarily self-regarding, to what is he to appeal? The creeds and codes of the world have sought to solve this problem by ignoring its inherent difficulty. They have tried to moralize people by promising them (in this life and the next) external rewards for doing right, and by threatening them with external punishments for doing wrong. In other words, they have appealed to selfish motives in order to induce them to lead unselfish lives. They have lowered the level of morality in the very attempts that they have made to raise it.

The philosophy of self-realization solves the problem by restating it; and it is able to restate it because it thinks of self as a limitless world. It says to each of us, "Die to self in order to live to self. Lose self in order to gain self." These paradoxes are old and faithful sayings; but their real significance is apt to be overlooked. They mean that the more unselfish a motive is, the more self-regarding it is, in the sense of paying regard to the interests of the true self. They mean that virtue rewards the virtuous by making them more virtuous, by furthering their spiritual development, by raising the level of their life; and that vice punishes the vicious by hindering their spiritual development, by lowering the level of their life. There is no place for selfishness in the scheme of life which makes our ministration to self, our attempts to promote its interests, the very means of its self-transcendence, of its passing—in response to the ever-increasing attraction of its ideal—beyond our reach and even beyond our aim. The quest of the ideal self moralizes us by making a due regard for our own interests—a motive which gains in efficacy in proportion as we widen and purify our conception of

self—the chief pre-requisite of an unselfish life. It teaches us so to think of self that in living for self we must needs live for God, and that in living for God we must needs live for our fellowmen. Ideally we are one; a united family; children of God. Actually we fall short of that ideal. Our harmony such as it is, emerges from a chaos of discords. Ever since our life on earth began, we have been quarrelling among ourselves; fighting with one another; killing one another; torturing one another; robbing one another; wronging one another in countless ways; indulging, at the expense of one another, the lower, the narrower, the less real self. Yet through all these social disorders, the social instinct has been at work. Men have formed themselves into communities, primarily for purposes of aggression and defence; and loyalty to one's community has been a never-failing way of transcending self. However selfish the community as a whole may be, it is open to each of its members to live for it, to work for it, to serve it, to die for it; and in that spirit of devotion we have the nucleus of the spirit of comradeship, of brotherhood, which will some day make the whole world one.



### Adversity

Adversity is the best teacher.

Adversity makes a man wise, not rich.

Adversity reveals genius, prosperity hides it.

God is tried by fire; brave men by adversity.

There is no education like adversity.

Servants are tried in job, relatives in calamity, friends in adversity, wife in loss of wealth.

—Other Men' Flowers



## One in All

The man of Knowledge is all Light. The fire of Divine Knowledge, "I am *Brahman*", is all the time burning within him. He is ever absorbed with firm conviction in the Divine meditation. If, however, there ever crops up any thought of duality, it is immediately destroyed by offering it as oblation in the sacred fire of monism. He allows full freedom to his mind (the horse) to roam about anywhere, but at the same time, as a safeguard, he deposes his army commander, 'discrimination' to follow the mind (horse) to protect it (horse) against being captured by worldly temptations. If the mind remains unattached and is not charmed or captivated anywhere by any temptation or desire, it means that at least that area has been conquered. If, however, the mind gets involved in some sort of desire (i.e., if the horse has been caught somewhere), it would be conquered back by using infallible arrows of *Tattvamasi* 'Thou art that'. At all the places where the mind (the horse) remained unattached, there was nothing but one's own self. It means that no duality was experienced anywhere. Each thing or each living being was realized to be one's own self. Nothing remained separate. Everything melted into oneness with all, the All. In this way, gradually the whole universe is conquered. All is in One and One is experienced to be in all. All are our own selves. Thus all the desires were automatically destroyed."

—Swami Rama Tirtha

## An Appeal

We offer our heartfelt thanks to the Lord Almighty that *The Kalyana-Kalpataru* has completed its XLlth and now going to bring about its next number dedicated to Lord Rāma the defender of social decorum and a light house for the travellers on the path of morality, spirituality and ethics. No human intellect could think of a better mould to give shape to all that is good and worth following, than the indisputable character of Lord Rāma.

You know and have first hand experience of what is going on here, there and everywhere throughout the world. The world has never witnessed so much degradation of moral character at every level from top to bottom. We intend to remind the society particularly our youths, of the moral lessons that can be drawn from the life pattern of Lord Rāma.

Eventhough the price index has shot up though unofficially, yet we have not increased the price of your journal which continues to remain Rs. 50/-at least for the next year.

We hope—it will be a worth reading number for all persons irrespective of their age or sex, caste or creed, due to its educative character and social reorientation. We sincerely hope that our readers will spare no effort on their part to enhance the family strength of *The Kalyana-Kalpataru*.

A Printed money-order form is attached with this issue to help the subscribers in remitting their subscription by money-order. However, those who do not want to continue for the next year, should inform us accordingly.

The Manager,

The Kālyana-Kalpataru

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